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DORINDA,
A
TOWN ECLOGUE.

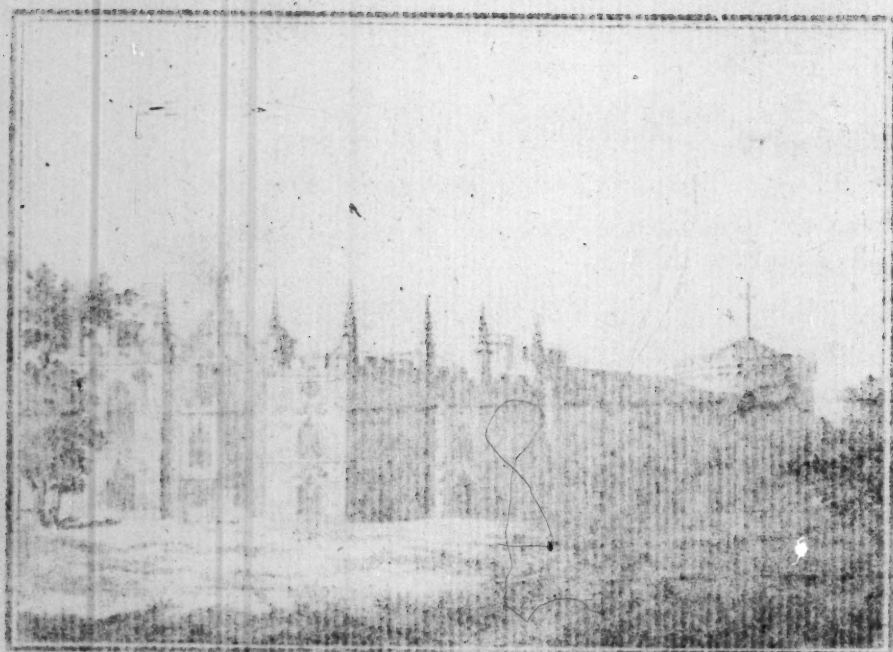
by F. J. Palmer



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DORINDA
A
TOWN ECLOGUE.



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STRAVANT'S HILL:

DORINDA,

A

TOWN ECLOGUE.

IN that sad Season, when the hapless Belle
With Steps reluctant bids the Town farewell;
When furlly Husbands doom th' unwilling Fair
To quit St. James's for a purer Air,
And deaf to Pity, from their much-lov'd Town
Relentless bear the beauteous Exiles down
To dismal Shades, through lonely groves to stray,
And sigh the Summers live-long Months away;
With all the Bloom of Youth and Beauty grac'd,
One Morn Dorinda, at her Toilette plac'd,
With Looks intent and pensive Air survey'd
The various Charms her faithful Glass display'd;
Eyes, that might warm the frozen Breast of Age,
Or melt to Tenderness the Tyrant's Rage;

A 2

Smiles,

Smiles, that enchanting with resistless Art,
 Stole unperceiv'd the heedless Gazer's Heart;
 Dimples, where Love conceal'd in Ambush lay,
 To aim his Arrows at the destin'd Prey;
 And Lips, that promis'd in each balmy Kiss
 Luxurious Harvests of ambrosial Bliss.
 Musing she sat, and watch'd each rising Grace
 That shed its Lustre o'er her heav'nly Face,
 Till lab'ring Grief her anxious Silence broke,
 And sighing thus the lovely Mourner spoke:
 Were Charms like these by erring Nature meant
 For sober Solitude and calm Content?
 Must Eyes so bright be doom'd to waste their Fires
 On hungry Parsons and unfeeling 'Squires?
 Heav'n, whose Decrees (if true what Priests have taught)
 Are fram'd by Justice and with Wisdom fraught,
 Sure ne'er created such a Form as this
 For the dull purpose of domestic Bliss.
 Ah! no, these Eyes were giv'n in Courts to shine,
 Shall impious Man then thwart the wise Design?
 A short-liv'd Sway of some few Years at most
 Is all, alas! the brightest Belle can boast,
 E'er yet the Hand of all-devouring Time
 Lay waste her Graces and destroy her Prime:

By

By slow Degrees she feels her Pow'r decay,
 And younger Beauties bear the Palm away.
 Whilst envious Fate thus hastens to destroy
 The fleeting Period of all female Joy,
 Shall barb'rous Husbands (whose tyrannic Rage
 Nor Pray'rs can mitigate, nor Tears assuage,)
 E'en in those Years whilst Youth and Beauty bloom,
 To Exile half her precious Moments doom?
 She goes like some neglected Flow'r to fade,
 And waste her Sweetness in the lonely Shade,
 Till Winter (so the pitying Gods decree)
 Returning sets th' impatient Captive free:
 Then swift emerging from the dull Retreat,
 To Town she flies admiring Crowds to meet;
 Her happy Hours glide on from Morn till Night
 One ceaseless Round of exquisite Delight;
 Balls, Op'ras, Concerts, Almack's, and Soho,
 By turns attended, various Joys bestow:
 E'en crouded Routs, where Dullness ever dwells,
 Can yield Delight to fashionable Belles.
 Old Maids and Prudes each Night to feed their Spleen,
 There, seeking whom they may devour, are seen,
 And, still repining that they must be chaste,
 Would mar those Pleasures they're forbid to taste;

Well

B

With

With envious Eyes the brilliant Nymph they view,
 Whilst eager Crowds where'er she moves pursue.
 If to the Play-house she by Chance repair,
 (Not oft frequented by the well-bred Fair)
 When through the House a solemn Silence reigns,
 Each Bosom feeling what the Actor feigns,
 E'en in the midst of some affecting Part
 That wakes each soft Emotion of the Heart,
 The Doors fly open, whilst the Pit beneath
 Their Discontent in fullen Murmurs breathe :
 Forward she steps with graceful Air, and spreads
 A Blaze of Beauty o'er their wond'ring Heads :
 Pit, Boxes, Gall'ries, all at once concur,
 Forget the Play, and fix their Eyes on Her.
 Scarce to the Stage she turns her high-plum'd Head,
 Or seems to mark one Syllable that's said ;
 But careless sits, and on her Arm reclin'd
 Hears civil Speeches from the Beaus behind ;
 Or gently listens while some well-dress'd Youth
 In whisper'd Accents vows eternal Truth.
 Obedient still to Pleasure's sprightly Call
 She quits the Play, and seeks the livelier Ball :
 Each white-glov'd Beau with Haste his Suit prefers,
 Presents his Hand, and humbly begs for hers.

Well

Well pleas'd she hears the suppliant Crowd entreat,
 And feels the Triumph of her Charms compleat.
 Should some blest Youth be to the rest prefer'd,
 Whose Vows in private are with Favour heard,
 As through the Dance with graceful Ease she moves,
 Their meeting Hands express their conscious Loves.
 Malicious Eyes the Lover's Looks restrain,
 And cold Discretion seals His Lips in vain;
 The faithful Hand can unobserv'd impart
 The secret Feelings of a tender Heart:
 And oh! what Bliss, when each alike is pleas'd,
 The Hand that squeezes, and the Hand that's squeez'd.
 But whither, whither does my Fancy roam?
 Ah! let me call the idle Wand'rer home.
 Already Phœbus, with unwelcome Ray,
 Has chas'd, alas! the Winter's Fogs away.
 Through the sad Town, at each deserted Door
 Less frequent now the Footman's Thunders roar;
 And Waggon's loading in the dusty Street,
 Forbode the Horrors of a long Retreat.
 Ye sister Suff'ers, who must soon or late
 All share my Sorrows and partake my Fate,
 Who, when condemn'd these blest'd Abodes to quit,
 Like me may weep, but must like me submit,

When

When overcome by Man's superior Force,
 Revenge is still the injur'd Fair's Resource:
 Revenge at least may make our Suff'rings less,
 A Husband's Anguish sooths a Wife's Distress.
 When far from Town, in some sequester'd Spot,
 You mourn the Hardship of our Sex's Lot,
 Ill-humour, Vapours, Sullenness, and Spleen,
 May add fresh Horrors to the gloomy Scene,
 And make the Tyrants who contrive your Fate
 Partake the Misery themselves create.
 If press'd by Cares they need a Friend's Relief,
 Be all your Study to augment their Grief;
 If pleas'd or gay, your utmost Arts employ
 To sink their Spirits and dispel their Joy;
 Oppose their Projects, cross their fav'rite Views,
 Their Wishes frustrate, their Requests refuse;
 And make them feel that discontented Wives
 Can prove the Torment of their Husband's Lives.

FINIS

